

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force: PCB Concerns
Status Feb 2017

In December 2016, EPA received a letter from the Spokane River Regional Task Force requesting a meeting to discuss TSCA allowances for PCBs and the revised WA Water Quality Standards. They are concerned that because TSCA allows use of PCBs at levels billions of times higher than the PCB water quality standard, the burden on the community is too great.

The EPA continues to offer technical support to Ecology as they implement the human health criteria and their other Clean Water Act programs, including use of the newly applicable implementation tools that the EPA approved in November 2016.

The EPA also continues to be engaged with Ecology and others in and around the Spokane area, including regularly participating in the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force (Task Force) meetings. The EPA water quality standards staff attended the Task Force's January 25, 2017, meeting to discuss the EPA's November 2016 actions and, specifically, the newly applicable PCB criteria. The EPA supports and commends the Task Force's collaborative efforts to develop a comprehensive plan to address PCB contamination in the Spokane River area. The EPA intends to remain involved in the Task Force meetings.

In response to the December letter, we are currently working with the Task Force to schedule the meeting they requested -- with EPA R10, and our national water and toxics offices. We are targeting later in March for this meeting. In the meantime, we have assembled a team to look at possible approaches to assist Spokane in addressing some of their PCB challenges.